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Office of Recovery Newsletter | March 11, 2022

Kansas Office of Recovery sent this bulletin at 03/11/2022 11:00 AM CST

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This week's edition of the Office of Recovery Newsletter features an article that details the Kansas Connect and Learn Initiative, which is a state match for the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) E-rate program that provides discounts for telecommunications, Internet access, and internal connections, and managed internal broadband services for school districts across the state.

Also included is an article highlighting the Child Care Sustainability Grants that are available to childcare providers to help cover the costs of operating their businesses through the remaining impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the latest information about resources available to Kansans, see the "Updates to Services and Support" section of this newsletter. For the most up-to-date information, please visit the Office of Recovery website at: COVID.ks.gov

Program Spotlight





Kansas Connect and Learn Initiative Provides Funds to Match Federal E-rate Program

The Strengthening People and Revitalizing Kansas (SPARK) Executive Committee and the State Finance Council approved the Kansas Connect and Learn initiative which proposed a \$4M state matching fund for school district technology infrastructure in Kansas.

The Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) E-rate program makes telecommunications and information services more affordable for schools and libraries with discounts for telecommunications, Internet access, internal connections, and managed internal broadband services. E-rate discounts range from 20% to 90% of the cost of eligible services. Most Kansas schools are currently at or above a 70% discount rate. To learn more about the FCC's E-rate program, visit this [website](#).

The Kansas Connect and Learn Initiative provides funding to match the E-rate program. For example, if a state provides eligible schools and libraries with funding for special construction charges for high-speed broadband that meets the FCC's long-term connectivity targets, the E-rate program will increase an applicant's discount rate for these charges up to an additional 10% to match the state funding on a one-to-one dollar basis.

State match funds are available to all Kansas schools for the costs associated with constructing fiber to enhance broadband infrastructure. Districts may apply for matching funds on the E-rate form 471. Federal E-rate funding is based on a School District's E-rate discount rate which is calculated utilizing the percentage of students who qualify for free meals through the National School Lunch Program

These matching funds are only for one-time new construction costs and the resulting broadband infrastructure must meet FCC bandwidth

recommendations.

If you have any questions, please visit <https://covid.ks.gov/> and click on “Contact Us” on the top right corner.

Program Spotlight



\$160 Million Available to Support Child Care Providers in Kansas

Last week, Governor Laura Kelly announced \$160 million in grants available for childcare providers in Kansas. The third round of Child Care Sustainability Grants will aid childcare providers in meeting the costs of operating their businesses through the remaining impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Qualifying childcare providers are guaranteed nine months of payments ranging from \$1,800 per month for family childcare programs to \$18,000 per

month for large centers. In addition, the providers will be eligible for an additional five months of funding either in the same amount or more, depending on the utilization of the grants during the first nine months.

The grant program will be administered by Child Care Aware of Kansas. The grant application is available at www.ks.childcareaware.org. Applications will be accepted until November 30, 2022. Grant dollars may be used for personnel costs, rent/mortgage, utilities, personal protective equipment, goods or services, purchases of or updates to equipment and supplies, and mental health supports.

To be considered for funding, newly licensed or established childcare programs must maintain an active permanent license with Kansas Department of Health and Environment, whether they remain open or temporarily closed. Funds may be used for any normal operational expenses, additional expenses the childcare program has due to meeting CDC guidance for mitigating the spread of COVID-19, and other activities necessary to maintain or resume the operation of programs.

Qualifying childcare providers in Kansas are encouraged to apply at www.ks.childcareaware.org.

Updates to Services and Support



Treasury Reporting Portal Registration Process Webinar

The Office of Recovery will be hosting a webinar on **Wednesday, March 16.**

at 11 a.m. This webinar will be a step-by-step walkthrough of the Treasury registration and reporting process.

You can register for this webinar here: [Webinar Registration](#)

Stay Informed on the SPARK Process

The SPARK Investment Idea Submission Form closed on February 16, 2022. Over 800 total submissions from various stakeholders across the state were received. The four Advisory Panels are continuing to meet to develop investment recommendations for the SPARK Executive Committee to consider. Panels will look at investment idea submissions to help shape programmatic level recommendations. The Executive Committee will then consider these panel recommendations before sending them to the State Finance Council, which has final authority on investment decisions.

Additional updates will be provided throughout the SPARK process. All Advisory Panel meetings have and will continue to be streamed on the [Kansas Office of Recovery YouTube Page](#). Meeting materials and recordings can also be found on our website: [Advisory Panels Materials](#).

Contact the RO

The Office of Recovery is here to offer support and coordination. Questions and inquiries may be submitted via the [Contact Us](#) form. Please visit covid.ks.gov for up-to-date information and resources on recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic for Kansas residents, businesses, and communities.

[Question/Request Form](#)

DeAngela Burns-Wallace, Ed.D.

Secretary, Kansas Department of Administration

On behalf of the Office of Recovery,

Kansas Governor Laura Kelly

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